

Unemployment Among Persons with Disabilities: A Gendered and Educational Perspective

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Abstract

People with disabilities are consistently pushed to the bottom of the job market globally. Their unemployment rates do not just fall behind those of non-disabled people but often appear microscopic. This study aimed to understand the continent-wise differences, examining how gender and education influence work opportunities for people with disabilities worldwide. Using 2022 data from the International Labour Organization, five major regions, Asia, Africa, the Arab States, the Americas, and Europe, have been compared to understand what drives exclusion from employment. It was found that Asia had only 5.52 percent unemployment among disabled people. Europe, however, recorded 26.03 percent. Low unemployment in developing countries often reflects informal and unstable work. Meanwhile, Europe's higher rate reflected structural barriers. Moreover, gender disparities lead to more complexities. In the Arab States, disabled women faced unemployment over seven percent higher than men, while in Europe, male PWDs fared worse. In some regions(Arab States,Africa,Asia), more education leads to higher unemployment, dubbed the "education penalty." In some areas(Europe), women with little education faced unemployment above 50 percent. People with disabilities aren't sidelined because they lack skills or motivation. They are being locked out by systems never designed for them and hence, the solutions should be region-specific. Europe may need reforms in welfare systems, while Asia may need the formalization of labor. The real struggle is not just about income but about dignity and the right to contribute to society.

Keywords: Disability,Unemployment,Intersectional Barriers,Labour Market